

# Critical thinking as a correlate of stress management among rural adolescent girls

■ Ritu Mahal\*, Asha Chawla and Vandana Kanwar

Department of Human Development, College of Home Science, Punjab Agricultural University, LUDHIANA (PUNJAB) INDIA

## ARTICLE INFO :

**Received** : 10.03.2015  
**Revised** : 13.04.2015  
**Accepted** : 24.04.2015

## KEY WORDS :

Stress management, Critical thinking

## HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE :

Mahal, Ritu, Chawla, Asha and Kanwar, Vandana (2015). Critical thinking as a correlate of stress management among rural adolescent girls. *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 6 (1) : 32-35.

\*Author for correspondence

## ABSTRACT

Critical thinking is the ability to apply intelligent problem-solving techniques to a particular situation. It means asking the right questions of the right people, listening to the responses and developing an approach to resolution that makes sense. The study investigates the effect of critical thinking on the management of stress. For the study 132 rural adolescent girls were selected from the Ludhiana district of Punjab. Self structured tests on critical thinking and Stress Management have been used. The findings revealed that correlation was significant in the post test scores of critical thinking and Stress Management. Thus, the study implies that educators and parents should enhance the critical thinking of adolescent so that they manage their stress successfully.

## INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to health by helping us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, peer pressure and the media. Some educators justify that the idea of critical thinking is a set of complex cognitive abilities enquiring about knowledge in order to use and apply (Ennis, 1985, Norris and Ennis, 1989 and Siegel, 1988).

Stress is a physiological reaction to outside and inside stressors. When that reaction exceeds the capacity of a particular adolescent to respond comfortably, mentally (emotional and behavioural), physically and socially, then it becomes a problem and need management. In these

situations, schools, colleges, communities, sport clubs and other social groups play a significant role. At the personal level, repeated practicing of life skills like critical thinking leads to a certain mastery and application of such skills to real life situation and gain control over the situation to de-stress oneself. This skill improve the positive health and self-esteem of adolescents (Kishore and Watode, 2011).

Many researchers have proved by now that our brain continues to develop throughout adolescent years also. Reasoning and judgment begin developing in the teen years, but the process continues into the early and mid twenties. This period is also refers as age of stress and storm. Because at this stage neither they are considered children and nor adults. In this dilemma, when adolescents have to take strained decisions, many times they act

impulsively without thinking about. It is hypothesized if during this period adolescents in general and teen girls in specific are equipped with the skill of critical thinking they will be able to manage their stress. Consequently, their chances of making rational decisions increased. Norris and Ennis (1989) believed that in order to be able to evaluate their own thinking and to change their thinking behaviour. Adolescents should know how to apply their knowledge and understanding.

Coping with Stress means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us and acting in ways that help us control our levels of stress, by changing our environment or lifestyle and learning how to relax. For example, by making changes to our physical environment or lifestyle or it may mean learning how to relax, so that tensions created by unavoidable stress do not give rise to health problems.

Though sufficient literature and research studies are available which studied the role of Stress Management in improving critical thinking but very few researches are available which explored the association of critical thinking with Stress Management. In the present study, the role of critical thinking on Stress Management was investigated.

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- To study critical thinking among adolescent girls.
- To study Stress Management among adolescent girls.
- To find out the relationship of critical thinking

with Stress Management among adolescent girls.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### Sample selection :

The total for the present study constituted 132 rural adolescent school going girls from villages like Hassanpur, Gahaur, Mohie, Mansuran and Bhanaur. The girl students enrolled in VIIIth and IXth classes in each school were included in the sample of the study. Detail of sample selection is shown in Fig. A.

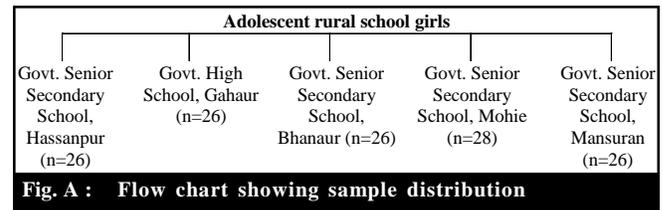


Fig. A : Flow chart showing sample distribution

### Research tools :

Self-structured schedules were used for measuring life skills like critical thinking and Stress Management of rural adolescent school going girls.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 presents the mean scores regarding life skill "critical thinking" of rural adolescent girls. The "critical thinking" mean scores of respondents belonging to village Hassanpur, Bhanaur and Mohie (mean scores-34.3, 34.1 and 34.2) were almost similar and comparatively higher

Sr. No.	Villages	Mean scores $\pm$ SD		t-value	Differences in mean scores
		Pre-test	Post test		
1.	Hassanpur	34.3 $\pm$ 2.3	41.3 $\pm$ 1.1	13.8*	7
2.	Gahaur	33.4 $\pm$ 3.0	38.0 $\pm$ 1.4	6.9*	4.6
3.	Bhanaur	34.1 $\pm$ 3.0	35.8 $\pm$ 2.2	2.3	1.7
4.	Mohie	34.2 $\pm$ 3.1	36.2 $\pm$ 1.9	2.8*	2
5.	Mansuran	33.6 $\pm$ 3.7	39.1 $\pm$ 1.8	6.0*	5.5

\* indicate significance of value at P=0.05

Sr. No.	Villages	Mean scores $\pm$ SD		t-test	Differences in mean scores
		Pre-test	Post-test		
1.	Hassanpur	45 $\pm$ 5.2	49.9 $\pm$ 2.9	4.2*	4.9
2.	Gahaur	44.4 $\pm$ 2.9	48.9 $\pm$ 1.8	6.6*	4.5
3.	Bhanaur	42.9 $\pm$ 4.8	47.8 $\pm$ 5.0	3.5*	4.9
4.	Mohie	42.8 $\pm$ 5.4	46.5 $\pm$ 4.0	2.9*	3.7
5.	Mansuran	45.1 $\pm$ 4.2	46.2 $\pm$ 4.2	.95	1.1

\* indicate significance of value at P=0.05

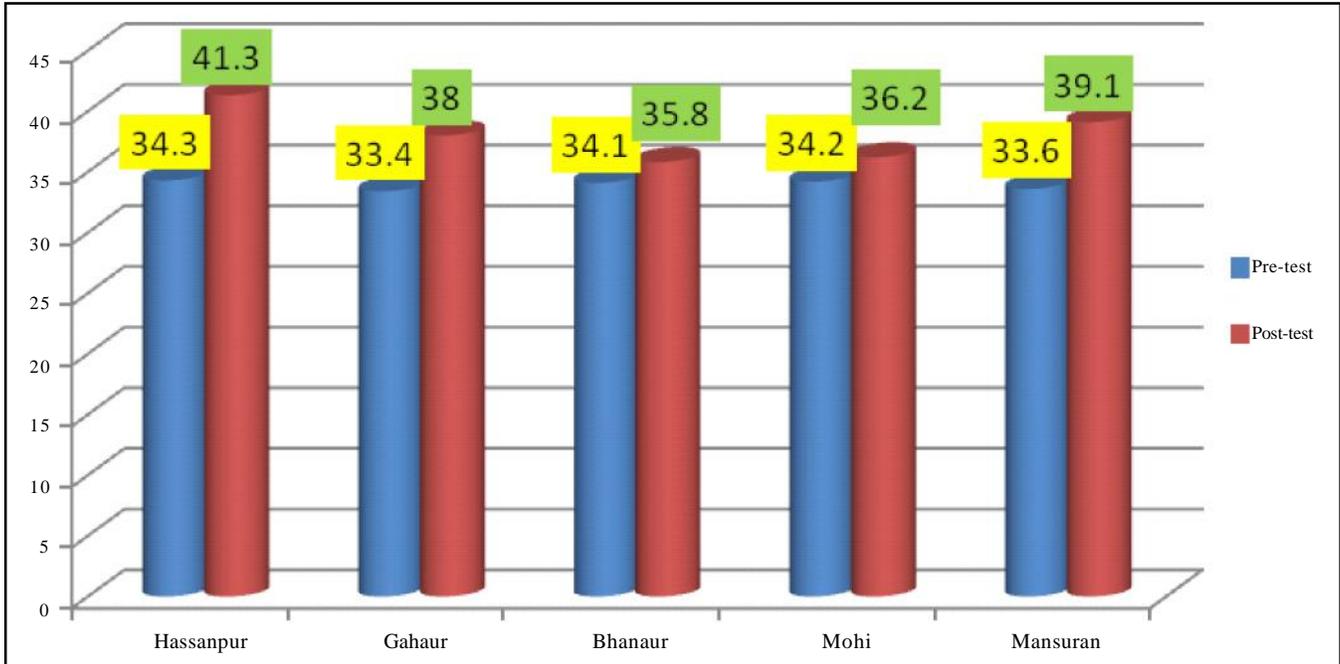


Fig. 1 : Comparison of life skill "critical thinking" of rural adolescent girls during pre-testing and post-testing

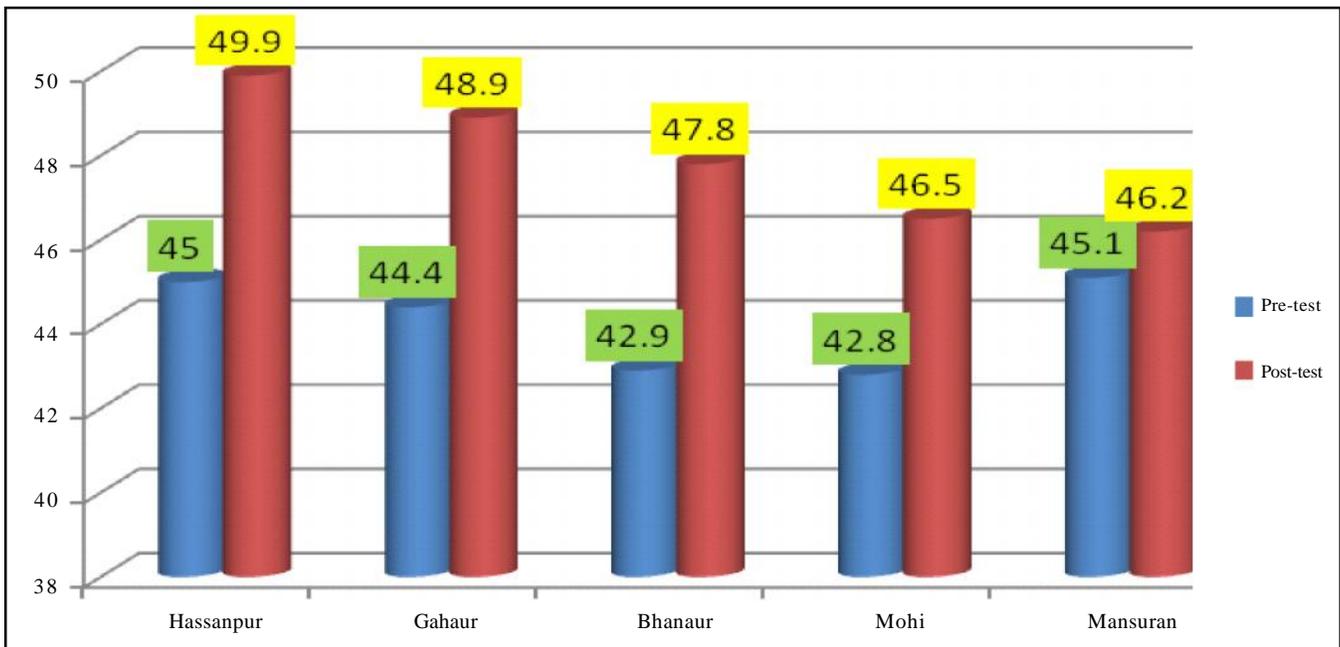


Fig. 2 : Comparison of life skill -"Stress Management" of rural adolescent girls during pre-testing and post-testing

Variables	Mean scores ± SD	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Critical thinking	33.93 ± 3.01	38.04 ± 2.64
Stress management	44.03 ± 4.67	47.90 ± 3.99
R	0.076	0.23**

\*\* indicate significance of values at P=0.05

than the mean scores of respondents belonging to village Gahaur and Mansuran, respectively. Differences in the mean scores of critical thinking reflects that respondents of village Hassanpur showed more improvement than their counterparts. The reason for improvement in critical thinking is the intervention provided in the form of mental games, puzzles and storytelling.

Table 2 depicted the mean scores regarding “Stress Management” of rural adolescent girls. It was observed that during pretesting the mean scores of respondents belonged to village Hassanpur (mean scores=45) and Village Mansuran (mean scores=45.1) were almost similar. The mean scores of village Bhanaur (mean scores=42.9) and village Mohie (mean scores=42.8) were almost equal. Gahaur were (mean scores=44.4) (Fig. 2). Post testing results showed that respondent’s belonging to village Hassanpur and village Gahaur significantly showed significant improvement in their Stress Managing skills. Differences in mean scores reflects that respondents of village Hassanpur and Bhanaur were more receptive to the intervention. Whereas respondents of village Mansuran were marginally improved in their stress managing skills.

Table 3 represents relationship between critical thinking and Stress Management among adolescent girls. During pre-testing, it was found that critical thinking was non-significantly correlated with Stress Management. But during post-testing, a significant relationship between critical thinking and Stress Management was found, indicating that with increase in critical thinking among adolescent’s the ability to manage their Stress also increases. Adolescents can learn to apply separate thinking skills in different situations immediately while they

are learning. Prawat (1991) and Weinston (1988) believed that the activities related to critical thinking skills and they solve their everyday problems and manage their stress which leads to improve their quality of life.

### Conclusion :

Results revealed that reason for improvement in critical thinking and Stress Management is the interventions provided in the form of mental games, puzzles and storytelling. With the help of interventions adolescent’s girls can cope up with stress and they can make strategies to manage anxiety and maintain their well-being. Stress Management is named as one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society.

### REFERENCES

- Ennis, R.H. (1985). A logical basis for measuring critical thinking skills. *Educational Leadership*, **43**(2) : 44-48.
- Kishore, J. and Watode, B. (2011). Stress management in adolescents. *Health & Population – perspectives & Issues*, **34**(1) : 11-18.
- Norris, S.P. and Ennis, R.H. (1989) Evaluating critical thinking: the Practitioners, guide to teaching thinking services, *Pacific Grove, CA: Critical thinking Press and Software*.
- Prawat, R. (1991). Embedded thinking skill instruction in subject matter instruction. *Association Supervision & Curriculum Develop.*, **1** : 185-186.
- Siegel, H. (1988). *Educating Reason : Rationality, Critical thinking and education*, Routledge, NEW YORK, USA.
- Weinston, M. (1988). *Integrating thinking skills into the school. Resource Publication*, **1** :